

Proclamation 8562 of September 16, 2010**Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, Constitution Week, 2010**

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

The summer of 1787 was a watershed moment in our Nation's history. In the span of four short months, delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia established a Constitution for the United States of America, signing the finished charter on September 17, 1787. With their signatures, and subsequent ratification of the Constitution by the States, the Framers advanced our national journey.

On Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, and during Constitution Week, we commemorate the legacy passed down to us from our Nation's Founders. Our Constitution, with the Bill of Rights and amendments, has stood the test of time, steering our country through times of prosperity and peace, and guiding us through the depths of internal conflict and war. Because of the wisdom of those who have shaped our Nation's founding documents, and the sacrifices of those who have defended America for over two centuries, we enjoy unprecedented freedoms and opportunities. As beneficiaries, we have a solemn duty to participate in our vibrant democracy so that it remains strong and responsive to the needs of our people.

Each year, thousands of candidates for citizenship commemorate Constitution Day and Citizenship Day by becoming new American citizens. These individuals breathe life into our Constitution by learning about its significance and the rights it enshrines, and then by taking a solemn oath to "support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America." In so doing, they voluntarily accept that citizenship is not merely a collection of rights, but also a set of responsibilities. Just as our Founders sought to secure the "Blessings of Liberty" for themselves and their posterity, these new Americans have come to our shores to embrace and impart the fundamental beliefs that define us as a Nation.

In the United States, our Constitution is not simply words written on aging parchment, but a foundation of government, a protector of liberties, and a guarantee that we are all free to shape our own destiny. As we celebrate this document's profound impact on our everyday lives, may all Americans strive to uphold its vision of freedom and justice for all.

In remembrance of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the Americans who strive to uphold the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 106), designated September 17 as "Constitution Day and Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 108), requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 2010, as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, and September 17 through Sep-

tember 23, 2010, as Constitution Week. I encourage Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, social, and educational organizations, to conduct ceremonies and programs that recognize our Constitution and reaffirm our rights and obligations as citizens of this great Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8563 of September 16, 2010

National POW/MIA Recognition Day, 2010

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

“Until every story ends” is a solemn promise to those who wear the uniform of the United States that they will never be left behind or forgotten. On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, we pay tribute to the American men and women who never returned home from combat, to those who faced unthinkable suffering as prisoners of war in distant lands, and to all servicemembers who have defended American lives and liberties with unwavering devotion. As a grateful Nation, we can never repay the profound debt to our heroes, and we will not rest until we have accounted for the missing members of our Armed Forces.

We demonstrate our deep gratitude and admiration for our brave patriots not in words alone, but in our actions to bring them home. Each year, specialists in our Department of Defense scour foreign battlefields and burial sites, interview witnesses, and search national and international archives for information about those missing from the Vietnam War, Korean War, Cold War, World War II, and other conflicts. Their work will not be complete, nor our commitment fulfilled, until the families of those taken or missing in action can rest knowing the fate of their loved ones.

On September 17, 2010, the stark black and white flag honoring America’s prisoners of war and those missing in action will be flown over the White House; the United States Capitol; the Departments of State, Defense, and Veterans Affairs; the Selective Service System Headquarters; the World War II Memorial; the Korean War Veterans Memorial; the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; United States post offices; national cemeteries; and other locations across our country. It is a powerful reminder that our Nation will never cease in our task to recover, remember, and honor the courageous men and women who have served and sacrificed so much for each of us.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 17, 2010, as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I urge all Americans to